EUROPE AS A COMMUNITY

—Michael P. Fogarty

THE

Commonweal

The Totalitarian Temptation

by John A. Lukacs

JOHN COGLEY ALISTAIR GUINAN GERALD WEALES

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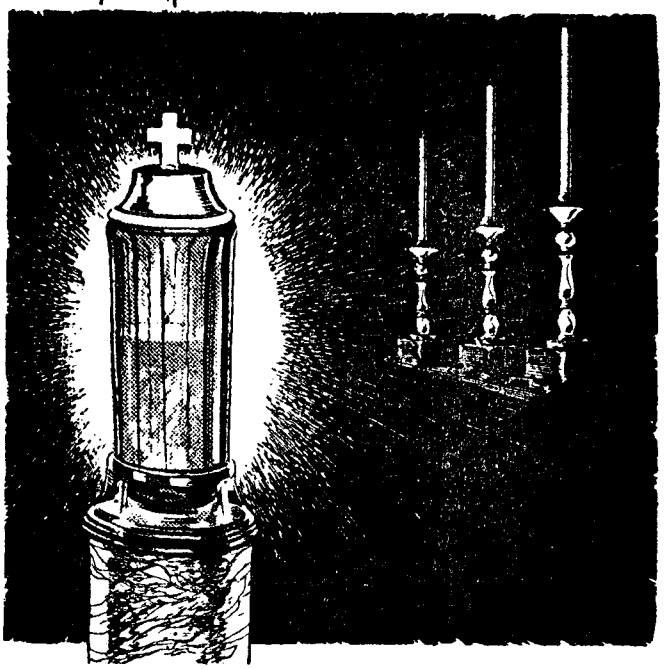

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THE

Commonweal

week by week

THE ROAD TO VOTES

BY present standards, the post of President of these United States used to be rather unexacting. Ever since the New Deal squared off against the big depression it has been different. And in the intervening years great burdens have been added to such new federal responsibilities as full employment and adequate farm income. There was the global war against the Axis. There were the many things, East and West, that have gone into our efforts to contain Soviet Communism, including the Korean War. And the President's responsibilities at home and throughout the world continue to increase.

All this was reflected in Mr. Eisenhower's State of the Union message, an address which once was all-inclusive in its first-of-the-year recommendations to Congress. Some years back a special Budget message was added. Now Government concerns have so increased that President Eisenhower has been impelled to schedule at least seven messages this January in order to deal with all the matters that should concern the Congress.

It is obviously beyond the skill of the brightest speech-writer to make inspiring listening (or exciting reading) out of the boiled-down summary of the many things the President and his advisors deem necessary to be done.

The Senators and Congressmen who sat there listening to the State of the Union message therefore found little really to cheer about in this enumeration. Much of their applause was clearly of a perfunctory variety, while a number of the President's most salient recommendations met with absolute silence. Within this framework came the two hearty bursts of applause which greeted Mr. Eisenhower's proposal that Communists convicted of conspiracy against the United States be deprived of their native-born or acquired American citizenship.

On this widely noted Congressional reaction the first and immediate conclusions could be extremely disturbing. For when the President was enunciating many of his most constructive proposals he met with apparent indifference on the part of the nation's legislators; only when he launched himself onto the dubious terrain so heavily exploited by Senator McCarthy and the Jenner and Velde Committees did Mr. Eisenhower encounter any really warm response. Only later were questions raised as to the Constitutional feasibility—not to say the advisability—of such deprivations of political rights.

In the debate that is going on among the leadership of the Republican Party as to the line to be emphasized in the coming Congressional elections this incident may seem to make it certain that Mr. Brownell's and Senator Knowland's rather than the President's own wishes about playing up the subversives issue will be followed.

THE legislators' applause, however, is far from demonstrating conclusively that the surest way to win votes in 1954 is to concentrate on charges of softness toward Communism on the part of the Truman Administration. As a political issue Communism has many advantages, not the least of which is its very simplicity. Scapegoats are, moreover, a welcome outlet for exasperations over the burdens imposed on us by the ambitions of the powerful Soviet Union. All that is arguable enough.

But will not large blocs of voters rather be swayed by much more intimate concerns when next November comes? The nation's farmers will cast their ballots on the basis of the evident results of the Republican farm program; members of the big labor unions will be much more influenced by the extent of national unemployment and their feeling of security in their jobs. Many citizens will even be greatly influenced by the degree of success of the Eisenhower foreign policy, the state of the national defenses and the strength and sentiments of our chief allies in Europe and the Orient. Applause and headlines now actually supply little guarantee of votes in November. But the program the President outlines so painstakingly will tell the story.

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REVISING THE CODE

MR. Samuel Goldwyn warned his fellow producers last month that unless Hollywood's present Production Code "is brought reasonably up to date, the tendency to bypass it, which has already begun, will increase." The general success of "The Moon is Blue" (which by-passed the Johnston Office's seal of approval) is ominous.

Mr. Martin Quigley, publisher of the *Motion Picture Herald*, who co-authored the Code (with Father Daniel A. Lord, S.J.) when it was prepared in 1930, shot back a charge that Mr. Goldwyn had unwittingly associated himself with "that cabal of clamor against the Code by those who seek the destruction of all restraints and standards in motion-picture entertainment. . . ." Mr. Quigley added that "the Code document consists primarily of the application of moral principles, based on the Ten Commandments." To call for its essential revision is "tantamount to calling for a revision of the Ten Commandments."

Doubtlessly, as Mr. Quigley says, the present Code is based on the Ten Commandments (though which of the Commandments forbids the depiction of miscegenation or interracial love affairs escapes us), but to say this is not to give the Code itself the permanent binding power of the Commandments. There is, first of all, the obvious difference in authorship to consider. Neither Mr. Quigley nor Father Lord would claim infallibility in drawing up a specific moral code, especially a code which, by the nature of things, can never be frozen as absolutely binding, good for all people in all places at all times. By and large, the authors of the Motion Picture Producers Code were necessarily concerned with making *prudential* judgments. The fact that these prudential judgments would have inevitable artistic effects surely complicated their task.

Take, for instance, the question of murder. Murder is wrong. It is wrong to commit murder, to connive with murder or to encourage others to murder. Does it necessarily follow then that the murderer in a Hollywood film must always get caught or go tumbling to his eternal fate over a convenient cliff? If a moviemaker permits a film murderer to escape the law (as some real murderers undoubtedly do), is he thereby flouting the divine law shamelessly? The answer would seem to be negative.

But the pertinent question, the supporters of the present Code argue, is whether in permitting such a criminal to escape, murder will come to be accepted as something less heinous than it is by the moviegoing public. Here one runs up against the *prudential* judgment again. One group will answer yes, another no. Both may share an equal distaste for murder but have quite different evaluations of the popular intelligence. There are certain things which both groups will agree upon readily: that passion-inciting gestures and obscenity, for instance, should have no place in the films. On other matters, even highly moral and prudent men will disagree.

Two distinct concerns seem to be involved. The first is the avoidance of what, by the nature of things, will be a temptation to the *average* moviegoer. One simply can not legislate a general code that fits every case. What an audience of mature theologians might take calmly might inflame an audience of adolescent boys; the kind of soupy moralism that might inspire an audience of small-town deacons might provide an audience of graduate students with serious doubts about their faith.

Finding what the average moviegoer can take without moral damage is no easy task. It depends on the average person himself, of course, and here time, place and custom surely matter. The modern youth who takes a scantily clad Betty Grable in stride would mystify a great-grandfather (from the days of the Floradora Sextette) whose temperature had a much lower boiling point.

The second problem is how far the movies can go in depicting life without seeming to put approval on sin and crime or contributing to lowering the moral tone of society. Here, again, the problem is one of legislating for the *average* mature moviegoer. It cannot be presumed that he is a child who has not yet observed life, or that he is a towering intellectual wholly uninfluenced by what he sees on the screen. Again, prudence demands a realistic look. The average moviegoer may not be precisely the same person he was twenty-four years ago.

NEXT WEEK

OSCAR W. PERLMUTTER writes about St. Xavier College of Chicago and its plan to set up a coordinated liberal education.

"The road to wisdom is long, and the lower schools must prepare the way. With respect to the young child the school has a twofold function: first, to transmit that part of the culture that cannot properly be acquired through ordinary and casual social relationships; and secondly, to assist in the intellectual growth of the child from the earlier stage of facts and experience to the higher levels of the arts and sciences preparatory to wisdom."

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In any case, no code should be written with only children in mind, unless the movies are to be deemed merely a juvenile diversion. As in Europe, the American film industry—if it wants to be taken seriously by mature men and women and still live up to its moral obligations—has to make more liberal use of the "Adults Only" sign and not reserve its use, as it often has seemed to do in the past, merely as an added incentive, with the lurid come-ons, for those childish adults looking for a cheap sensation inside the theatre.

THREE NATIONS

THE theological proposition that because he is free man can damn himself has its political parallel. The characteristic of what we call the free world is that each of its members has the ability to exile and damn itself, to join the Soviets if it pleases, to toy with the idea of an alliance with the Soviets just as a man may toy with the pleasures of temptation.

Italy, France and India, the first two members of the Atlantic Alliance, the third politically "neutral" but committed to democracy, are now playing with temptation, fascinated with the possibilities both of pleasure and of spite which might be had—at a certain cost.

India is a case of spite. In its anger over the possibility of U.S. military aid for Pakistan, India has let it be known to the West that it could always get aid, on its part, from the Soviet Union. This probably is scare talk; nobody thinks that Prime Minister Nehru intends to join the Soviet bloc, but it is not unthinkable that he might skate on some very thin ice in order to block the Pakistan deal and maintain his power of balance in Asia. The problem, of course, is that thin ice easily breaks.

The situation in France is not so serious. Much of the talk there is the theorizing by which the irresponsible always seek a panacea. Some non-Communist Socialists and neutralists talk of a Soviet-Franco-British alliance to guard against a German resurgence. But so long as the government remains in the hands of pro-Western leaders, the foreign ministry in the hands of the MRP, and the British in their right minds (and they show no signs of being otherwise), such a pact will be a pipe dream.

What *is* occurring there is a periodic and inevitable champing against the agonizing responsibility of the Indochina war, against the patronizing attitude of many in the United States, against Mr. Dulles' pushing, against all of the French problems and weaknesses. It could become serious if the United States were to continue to shove and to patronize. What is necessary is for the U.S. State Department to be able to draw a line between how much of a push may be useful to break a clinch, and how much may prove to be arrogance.

And Italy has the strangest problem of all. At the time of the elections last year, a large number of ballots were challenged. Excluding these ballots, the Christian Democratic coalition had less than a majority and conceded defeat. The government they subsequently formed on the basis of help from the Monarchists has failed in a controversy between left and right wing groups within the party. At this writing, it appears that a new cabinet will be formed which will be based on the left-wing, land-reform elements in the Christian Democrats.

But the irony of the situation is that a check of challenged ballots shows now that the central coalition actually won a clear majority of the Italian vote. The verdict on the vote can only be accepted by the legislature, and obviously the Communists who profited by the mistake will not vote to rectify it. So the votes are being counted four a day in order to hold off a showdown, and the only solution seems to be the holding of new elections, which no one wants, since no faction is confident about the outcome. In the meantime, the Communists and left-wing Socialists exploit the difficulties of the weak government, and Mrs. Luce flies to Washington with a most pessimistic report for the State Department, holding that Italy may yet fall to the Communists.

Indeed, as the right-wing Socialists are in a state of disintegration, it is at least conceivable that a coalition led by left-Socialists and the Communists could gain enough votes to take control, should elections be held at a time when there was dissatisfaction with the Christian Democrats.

So the situation might be summarized thus: The French are flirting with the Soviets from a distance, but their heart is not in it; the Indians are, so to speak, accepting dates with the gentleman in the Kremlin; the Italians are in downright danger of seduction.

And behind it is a feeling of being fed up with United States impatience, of being threatened, overtly as with India, or tacitly, as with France, by the United States in its anti-Communist crusade. What is the solution? The basic resolution must come from the sanity and sense of self-preservation of each country. America's contribution can only be some shift from ends to means, from fighting the Soviets to the patient attentions which hold together the anti-Soviet world.

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The Totalitarian Temptation

SINCE THIS IS THE CENTURY OF TOTALITARIANISM, IT CANNOT BUT AFFECT MANY CATHOLICS; IN THIS FACT THERE IS BOTH A DANGER AND A HOPE.

JOHN A. LUKACS

EVERY century has its theme, and the theme of the twentieth is totalitarianism. To deny this amounts to complacency; and the main concern of this article is with complacency. I wish to establish the proposition that the relationship between Catholics and totalitarianism is by no means as unequivocal as is generally thought. (That I am speaking of Catholics and not of Catholicism is a distinction the appropriateness of which should become clearer later in this article.)

Our understanding of the roots of totalitarianism has hitherto been rather inadequate, yet there is no doubt that the totalitarian appeal of the twentieth century rose out of the deficiencies of an Age of Reason. From an unduly optimistic view of the nature of man and, consequently, from many unwarranted illusions about the nature of politics and of societies, failure has come in many places. From this failure the totalitarians have prospered. An uneasy perception of the same broken illusions has also drawn the attention of many to the Catholic Church, a Church that always has maintained a wise skepticism about the meaning of material progress and man's ability to transform the world into a Garden of Eden. For both—the Church with immense sadness, the totalitarians with blatant joy—register the failure of the Age of Reason.

From this parallel attraction—to totalitarianism and to the Church—a conclusion immediately suggests itself. Its logic, at first sight, seems very compelling. It forms the basis of the popular liberal-broad-minded view of the problem. It reasons that the appeals of totalitarianism and of Catholicism are not only parallel but that, in many instances, they actually merge. It claims that the appeal of Catholicism, like the appeal of totalitarianism, is emotional rather than spiritual. There are men and women, it is said, who, for various reasons, yearn for guidance, for authority; who, in our troubled world, are not brave enough or willing to rely on their own intellectual judgment and spiritual resources. These are people with an authoritarian frame of mind. They need the inner comfort of an absolute religion. And this is illustrated by those former Communists who, in joining the Church, merely sought refuge, in the words of many critics, in another authoritarian faith. It is a seemingly convincing argument.

This argument—at its best, aligning, at its worst, equating, the authority of the Church with the authority of Bolshevism—extends from psychology into politics. It is pointed out that the Catholic record against totalitarianism is, essentially, a negative record. Nowhere, it is said, does Communism flourish more than in Catholic countries, where the innate lassitude and corruptibility of the Latin character is coupled with many social inequalities, countenanced by a Church that clings to the remnants of the aristocracy: obviously it is in Italy and France and not in Germany or Sweden where Western European Communism is strongest. And, it is said, even though the Church—for evident and selfish reasons—has been consistent in opposing Communism, it has been notably deficient in opposing Fascism. Spain, and always Spain, is advanced as the prominent example. Some Latin American nations and the Italy of Mussolini follow. It is again, at first sight, an impressive listing.

THE standard Catholic defense is, however, no less impressive and convincing. To the unique opposition of the Church to Communism, Catholics may point with pride and justification. It shows a constancy, compared to which the record of other religious or secular organizations is singularly pale. It far overshadows the fact that the French and Italian Communists are, temporarily, strong; and it could be justly argued that their strength derives from the Jacobin, and secularist, and not from the Catholic, heritage of these Latin countries. When it comes to social justice, the Catholic defense stands, again, on solid ground. There are the Papal encyclicals, prescient and wise, notably contrasting with the social ethics of their day; there are the numerous Catholic warnings against the material and spiritual evils of industrialism and capitalism. And while for a variety of reasons, the opposition of the Church to Fascist regimes has not always been visible on the surface, this opposition has

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nevertheless been unique and effective: the Church earned the thorough hatred of Mussolini and especially of Hitler.

From a historical perspective this is very impressive. For the strongest political defense of Catholicism is always a historical one: there are very few thinking men today, including those critical of Catholic politics and states, who would still claim that the liquidation of the Catholic Hapsburg monarchy in 1918, a liquidation then proposed and supported by many sincere Protestants, impeded rather than hastened the cause of totalitarianism in Europe.

Yet these are standard, though righteous, arguments. They are voiced by scholars and writers in moods of dialectics and of apology. And because these are arguments of an intellectual debate rather than the products of painful thought and true research, they might not bear profound historical scrutiny. For to counter the image of one side of a coin by presenting, proudly the other side, gleaming and tangible, is not yet the whole. The double surfaces, alone, do not make the coin.

There is, namely, another aspect of all this. It is not visible on the surface. It lies and moves with those darker undercurrents of the human heart which, more than ever, make history in this era of emotional mass movements. The illumination of these currents, however momentary, however difficult, reflects a picture that is painful in its truth. It destroys the complacency with which the usual Catholic rebuttal to the charges that link Catholics with totalitarianism is often made. It is, in brief, the fact that Catholics have been, and indeed, sometimes still are, the pacemakers of totalitarianism.

Catholics, I say again, and not Catholicism. Catholics, mostly, who have fallen away from the Church, but also some who regard themselves as very good Catholics and staunch members of the Church militant. What is more, these Catholics often assist the totalitarians not in a negative but in a positive way. For they are not in a reactionary mood. They are, so they think, on the side of progress.

Again, it is Germany which may prove an anchorpost for our examination. Let us return to that contrasting picture of the two Germanies which we all are so fond of presenting (and, surely, with much justification): Catholic, romantic, easy-going, motley South Germany, the mountain landscape of Mozart and of Saint Florian; Protestant, sentimental, hard-eyed, militaristic North Germany, the bleak plains and heathen forests of Wagner and of Frederick the Great. It explains much of German history. It explains much of Hitler. Much, but not all.

For Hitler was born a Catholic, and so were many of his cohorts. If not the ideological ancestors of National Socialism, then the popular origins of the National Socialist Party had come from Austria, Bohemia, Bavaria—all predominantly Catholic parts of Germanic Europe. Hitler's public career started off at Munich, and Bavaria, Catholic Bavaria, has remained the stronghold, the Piedmont, of the National Socialist movement ever since. Not Berlin, not Hamburg, not even Prussia. That Hitler admired Prussia, that he despised the traditions of a free, Catholic Austrian monarchy, is another story; at any rate, he had not succeeded in capturing the soul of an aristocratic Prussia; to his last days he maintained, with other, greater and more fantastic traits, the sentimentalism, the false Bohemian imagination and the petty *grandezza* of a Bavarian accordion-player.

Some of his best soldiers were Catholics. I do not wish to criticize the heroism and courage of a Molders, or a Dietl. It was, however, heroism and courage for a cause which, surely, was tainted by evil; evil whose existence these Catholics simply overlooked. Yet theirs, at least, was a mood of complacency and bourgeois self-righteousness. It was not the mood of the SS, of an organization whose significance the world has not yet realized. It is unlikely that it will realize it in the near future.

The SS were Hitler's élite troops. They were, also, amateur soldiers. Yet these amateur soldiers were, by and large, the best fighters of World War II. They outfought the professionals on every front. And this is a very important point here. For they fought so desperately, so ably, precisely because they were volunteers, volunteers for a cause, for a way of life that, to them, seemed to represent a great challenge to soulless existences under the gray clouds of hypocritical democracy and industrial capitalism. They also challenged what to them seemed old and now useless principles and traditions. Moved by this challenge, they closed their ranks and fought admirably. Moved by this challenge, they murdered five million people in and outside gas chambers; they were seen smashing the skulls of infants to stone walls.

And most of them were Catholics. Not only Germans but Slovaks, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Croats and even some Western Europeans were among them. Among the German SS-men very many were Austrian, Bavarian, Sudeten peasant boys: Wisliceny, Eichmann, Kaltenbrunner, Skorzeny, the great SS chieftains, alternate murderers and marauders, were born to Catholic parents, in a Catholic landscape. Some of them had gone to parochial schools. And, in contrast to their colder Prussian brethren, they inherited a certain cynical Catholic spirit of *bonhomie*. Most of them, of course, had gradually fallen away from the Church, yet some of them, the Belgian Degrelle, for example, continued professing their faith. The leader of the Hungarian National Socialists, Szálasi, was and remained a Catholic. He had, with German help, ousted a Regent, Protestant

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in faith, whose main offense had been that he tried to save the remaining half of his country's Jews after the other half had been killed.

I have said that many of these people were born Catholics and later abandoned their faith. There were, however, a great many Catholics (and not only in Germany), who, though they continued receiving the Sacraments, complacently overlooked and, at times, even approved, the actions of the SS. And this is a fact with which we should be concerned, for it has a terrible relevance to the present and the future of the West. Relevance, that is, if we accept the political assumption of this essay: the assumption that Communism is not the only totalitarian movement that is a present danger to the Western world and to its Christian traditions, and that, in the long run, other totalitarian movements may prove more attractive and even more successful.

I beg the reader to accept, for the moment at least, this central assumption. This is not the place for a comparative study of the various modern totalitarian movements—the Communist, Fascist and National Socialist. But it is National Socialism that I assume to be the major totalitarian theme of our century. That Hitler is dead does not diminish the validity of this assumption. National Socialism has proved more virile, more imaginative, more attractive than the dry Communist doctrine emanating from beneath the cold towers of Moscow, and the events of the German revolution of 1933, that quick abdication of civic responsibilities by many orderly institutions and classes of a Western and civilized state, is, I think, of much greater significance to the West than the barbaric events of Tartary in 1917. In the thirty-six years that have passed since the Russian Revolution not one people in the world has gone Communist by itself; the weedy plants of Communism, from East Germany to North Korea, have had to be planted or at least guarded by bayonets, by the military power of Russia. But there were, and are, other totalitarian régimes throughout both hemispheres that came to power with much more popular spontaneity. They did not need the support, or the proximity, of foreign armies.

If we consider, then, the interrelationship of Communism, Fascism, National Socialism, we should, after some thought, reach a conclusion that further strengthens my central assumption. This is the conclusion that, in the 1950s, it is not Communism and not Fascism but National Socialism that provides the only common denominator to all totalitarian states and movements. To equate Communists with Fascists is a false and tawdry generalization, practiced by many liberals; yet one adjective, the national socialist one, fits all totalitarian tendencies in our day. Tito, Hitler, Stalin; Perón, Mao, Mossadegh; all have a common trait; they all are national socialists. For they all exploit and prosper from the emotional tendencies of the masses. In different degrees they all are against old-time capitalism. And they all are extreme nationalists.

THAT the opposition of many Catholics to totalitarianism has not been as clear as we might wish is one thing. Curiously, however, our own recognition of this unpleasant fact does not make the case of our critics stronger. Rather, the contrary is true.

The reason for this is the concentration of the whole dialogue upon arguments which are neither relevant nor correct. "Catholicism and democracy are essentially opposed," say the critics. "They certainly are not," say the defenders. But the questions are not these. Their proper phrasing should be: "Catholicism cannot accept the principle of majority rule." And the answer should be: "For a principle of justice, it cannot indeed." "Good," the critics reply, "thus you admit that the Roman Church is essentially authoritarian." To which the true answer should be: "Authoritarian, yes. Totalitarian never."

Here we arrive at a most essential distinction.

For this is the paradox: In our century, hasty and impatient, Catholicism stands accused of being too rigid, too authoritarian, too disciplinary, clinging to traditions of an outmoded past. But this is the same perception which, foolishly enough, views the totalitarians, and especially those of the "Right" (in itself an outmoded categorization), as super-"reactionaries." The very opposite is true. And thus the full paradox emerges that the Roman Catholic Church will ultimately stand in the way of all totalitarians, including National Socialists, precisely because of its ancient principles, traditions and "reactionary" skepticism. On the other hand, Catholics will march along with, if not ahead of, the totalitarians at times and in places where the climate of the mass-man has triumphed, where provincial ideals have come to rule, where the function of the majority principle as a means to promote individual dignity and liberty ceases to be recognized; where the ends and means have already been reversed; where the material and social status of the majority has alone come to define progress and democracy.

This is a very interesting, though immensely sad, phenomenon. Catholicism, with its great emphasis on free will and on individual conscience, has never been inclined to accept the majority principle as a yardstick with which to measure the progress of societies. The majoritarian concept of the primacy of the community over the individual was, essentially, a Puritan idea. When Paul Blanshard accuses Catholicism of totalitarian tendencies, what he really means is authoritarianism and not totalitarianism; he wishes to defend not liberty but the majority principle. And all this would be well if only the majority principle and liberty always

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went hand in hand. The terrible lesson of the twentieth century is that, unfortunately and often enough, they are mortal enemies.

In other words, it could be said that when and where Catholicism defends ancient liberties it is not because then and there the Catholic Church has finally swallowed the lessons of democracy; it is because it has maintained its reservations about democracy.

That our intellectuals are beginning, uneasily, to sense this cruel dilemma, is true. But to sense does not mean to perceive, let alone to realize. Hence their fearful confusion. To them the acknowledgment that the principles of liberty and of majority rule might diverge, would be a painful admission. Not to thinking Catholics, however; and this is why among those very few who, already in the pleasant Victorian age, had sensed and forecast the climate of the totalitarian century, thinkers with a Catholic temper predominated: Newman, Acton, Donoso, Péguy were some of these very few. What to others would have amounted to painful admission, to them was but sad truth. They recognized it.

Yet many Catholics—and, it may be said, most American Catholics—have not. Their failure of recognition does not, however, come from confusion. It is that failure which comes from complacency. And one of the facets of this complacency is the ideology of anti-Communism.

ANTI-Communism, that is, if we consider its circumstances. To be an anti-Communist in Poland or in Hungary today requires determination and audacity; to combat Communism in the red suburbs of Paris or Milan calls for sacrifice and noble charity. For a young American intellectual to have resisted the enticements of Marxist doctrinaires in the hot, depressing asphalt labyrinths of New York in 1932, meant the possession of such gifts as inner fortitude and honesty. To speak up, in 1942, against the then generally accepted superficialities and illusions about Russia constituted an act of considerable courage and wisdom. But for an American Catholic to bask in the respectable knowledge of anti-Communism in 1954 requires neither audacity nor determination, sacrifice, noble charity, inner fortitude, courage nor wisdom. It connotes rather a temper of easy self-satisfaction.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. It is necessary to oppose Communism, any time, anywhere. But, for an American Catholic to oppose it is not a special virtue. (It was not a special virtue for a German Jew to oppose Hitler.) It is rather a simple duty, a duty which, for most Catholics, calls for very little sacrifice. In a prosperous America, amidst the political and social circumstances of our day, it calls for no sacrifice at all. And because it does not call for sacrifice, in these circumstances, this opposition to Communism should not become a central ideology. Yet it does.

It is here that the hidden dangers lie. For this central and wrathful preoccupation with Communism obscures the existence and potential power of other totalitarian appeals. To claim that Communism, alone, is the source of most of our evils, denotes in itself lazy thinking and blind smugness. (It also denotes the lack of contrition, another Catholic duty.) From there it is but a short step to claim that other (and, at times, anti-Communist) totalitarians are, potentially, not too harmful. And it is an even shorter step to hint that, perhaps, we were mistaken in opposing Hitler. And this is a delusion over whose ethical emptiness tower its dark and tangible portents; for, as I said earlier, Hitler may be dead but National Socialism certainly is not.

The importance of these portents, then, becomes immediately evident when we consider that, to Hitler, anti-Communism proved not an end but a political means. That the war, in which he first annihilated Catholic Poland, which war then destroyed Europe, and which ultimately resulted in the great advance of Soviet Russia, was launched by Hitler in secret and greedy connivance with Stalin is one fact; the other is that the true anti-totalitarians have been the men who fought *both* Hitler and Stalin, such men as De-Gaulle, Mihailovic, Anders, De Gasperi, Adenauer, Mindszenty.

I said that the SS had very many Catholics in its ranks (though most of them had already fallen away from the Church). I do not have to say, for it is common knowledge, that Senator McCarthy is today supported by very many American Catholics. Those erstwhile Catholics who swarmed into the SS did so because they lived in a loveless and functional world that seemed to admire only material success; also, because they had drawn little inspiration from a faith which, once one stepped beyond formal observance, called for deeds of sacrifice, self-abnegation and brotherly charity—from a Church, in a word, that is truly international. In 1954, in a world that admires brutal success, too many American Catholics associate crusades with smashing, total, unconditional victory; not with sacrifice, self-abnegation, brotherly charity.

There are deeper, social roots to all this. Again, these have much to do with both National Socialism and with complacency. I am conscious of the fact that there are parallels between Hitler and McCarthy, Germany and America. Fortunately, there are also tremendous differences between them. History does not repeat itself. Yet historical tendencies do. It is due to them that certain parallel phenomena should be observed; it is their portent that alarms.

The earliest beginnings of nationalism (as distinct from patriotism) in Germany as well as in America were bound to Protestant causes: in Germany to Luther, in

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America to the Puritans. For a long time in America, and in Germany, Catholics were thought of with a certain suspicion because of their alleged mysterious international loyalties. In the minds of a few, this "internationalism" qualified Catholics as potential subversives.

These circumstances have, however, changed. The number of Catholics grew. Their social status improved; they worked hard and became acceptable. German Catholics, from their peaceful houses and landscape, came forward to prove that those Teutonic virtues and traditions which had made Prussia so successful were also theirs. American Catholics, against whom stubborn discrimination had persisted until not so long ago, now find themselves in the enviable position of sterling patriots. Not only have they reached their erstwhile dream of social acceptability but their religious affiliation automatically qualifies them as first-class citizens with a high security rating in a society dedicated to the fight against Communism. Thus, to be a native-born and professing Catholic, for the first time in the history of the United States, means a practical advantage, and not a handicap.

THERE were ages that were happier than ours. They were happier when the primacy of spiritual over material prosperity was vaguely but widely sensed; when the spirit of Catholicism permeated much (though never all) of the everyday life of Catholics. The distinction between Catholicism and Catholics can not, however, be adequately defined. It cannot be defined because the principles of material observation and measurement cannot be applied to the human soul. Under these circumstances even a sociological observation of religious practices has relatively little significance. It is entirely possible that Mass-attendance, say, in 1936, was higher in Linz than in Louvain, in Munich than in Mulhouse. It does not flow from this that the people of Linz and Munich were necessarily better citizens.

Catholics are human. And because they are human, they are apt to reflect the temper of their times. In the eighteenth century, when the world was obsessed with the illusions of rationalism and enlightenment, Catholics were prone to be hesitating, apologetic. During the last century, which was obsessed with the illusions of national self-determination and scientific progress, Catholics either went along with a weakening faith or fell back to an introverted attitude that was reactionary in the true sense of the word. This century is the century of totalitarianism. It cannot but affect many Catholics.

The recognition of this state of affairs is a matter of supreme importance, for the Church cannot truly prosper in an era of complacency and hypocritical "tolerance." It is the uniqueness of the Church that imposes a special burden on Catholics in this age when there is not only a constant clamor for justice but also a constant neglect of injustice; when rights are stressed but duties are not.

Here we arrive at the ultimate conclusions.

I wished to demonstrate that there is no reason for complacency about the relationship of Catholics to the totalitarian trends of the day. But what is so curious is that, while emphasizing what to them seemed the fruitless, and negative attitude of the Church to totalitarianism, even the critics of the Church have largely failed to understand how Catholic populations and individuals have sometimes aided the totalitarians.

One reason for the critics' failure to emphasize the positive contributions of Catholics to totalitarianism may be that, after all, the Catholic over-all record has been singularly good; the noble resistance of many Catholics and the spiritual survival of Catholicism have been evident amidst circumstances where other religious and social doctrines have been far more compromised. For, while there were many provincial Catholic compromisers, there were many Catholic martyrs with an aristocratic frame of mind, men who simply recognized not the promised privileges but the essential burdens which their Catholic principles required from them in a tottering world.

Many Catholics, and many American Catholics, do not understand totalitarianism. Because of this misunderstanding, the weapons of many will misfire. Because of other misconceptions, and moved by the uncharitable temper of self-righteousness, many will make way for other, and infinitely more popular, totalitarians. Because of that complacent self-righteousness, many will abandon the last shreds of the Catholic habit of self-questioning and will support the new totalitarianism of some anti-Communist ideology. Some will even wind up among the leaders of this ideology. But, if the totalitarians are going to be true to their own bent, there will come a point—or, rather, two, five, ten, twenty minor, and sometimes invisible, points—where they, perhaps unwittingly, will have to conflict with the Church. Then those Catholics who wish to remain with them will have to be, necessarily, ex-Catholics.

For, while it is certain that there are many Catholics who truthfully reflect the totalitarian tendencies of our awful age, it is even more certain that the last opposition to the totalitarians will have to come from men and women who, always and everywhere, uphold Catholic principles.

They may be few; and they may perish. Even then, in a new age of the catacombs, the Church will prosper; and, ultimately, it will be again the examples of these few Catholic Christians that will, silently and from the dead, save the world by exhorting future generations to sacrifice.

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Europe as A Community

Cardiff

I CANNOT honestly say that I enjoyed being a British delegate at the European Movement's Second Hague Congress last fall. The first Congress, it will be remembered, was held in 1948, and was the point of departure from which came the Council of Europe, and less directly the Schuman Plan, EDC, and the prospective European Political Community. I do not mean that this time anyone was actually rude to us. But we were aware from start to finish that this was an affair of the heartland of Europe, the six little-Europe nations, and that we marginal Scandinavians, or Anglo-Irish, or for that matter Greeks, Turks, Poles or Rumanians, were there to be seen and not heard.

The keynote of the Congress was the extent to which "Europe" is already an accomplished fact. There were complaints of delay by Ministers and Parliaments in finishing the job. But always the discussion came back to what has actually been done in the last five years, and above all to the Coal-Steel Community. Robert Schuman told us that in his mind the technical and economic value of the Community had always been secondary. The primary aim had been to break the ice of nationalism; to produce an accomplished fact of supra-national European unity, in at least one really important sector.

Conferences, without constraint, have urged for years the abolition of customs duties and quotas on coal and steel, and of discriminatory transport charges. In vain. But the High Authority has wiped them out in a year, with the good will of all concerned. And many of the imagined difficulties have vanished into thin air. The Belgian mine-owners and trade unions, in perfect good faith, have insisted for years that their old and inefficient concerns could not stand the blasts of all-European competition. They proved their case to their own Government, which subsidized them. Also to the framers of the Coal-Steel treaty, who allowed the subsidies to continue for a time, and provided that the treaty might be temporarily suspended as far as Belgium was concerned. In actual fact, faced with the knowledge that this respite could be only temporary, the Belgians have put forth such efforts that it has been unnecessary to suspend the treaty, and subsidies are already running below the maximum level which the treaty would allow.

ON THE political side, evidently, there was less to report. There is the Council of Europe. There is the draft statute for a European political community. There is the progress in popular understanding of the European question shown by the German elections. But all this is only a beginning. It is on the economic side that M. Schuman's accomplished fact is there. And it is not surprising that it was on the economic side that the Congress showed European thought at its most mature.

There were, in the Economic Commission, some fine old liberals of the nineteenth-century school, notably from Italy and Germany. An elderly British banker reminded us over and over that what truly matters is sound money. Socialist speakers leaped to the counter-attack, defending the trade union and labor point of view to such effect that the Christian Democratic group, half-way through the Congress, sent the word round that the Socialists must not be left with that field to themselves.

But the Commission showed a certain impatience with one-sidedness of either kind. It quickly became clear that there is in fact broad agreement in the European Movement on a middle-of-the-road policy. Yes, we must have an open European market for all types of goods and services, without tariffs or quotas; and, going beyond even the draft statute of the European Political Community, we must have a strict time limit (ten years) within which this is to be achieved. Yes, there must be a free flow of capital from country to country, and a sound money policy enforced, if necessary, by a European authority against individual countries. Yes, the citizens of Europe (and more particularly the Italians) must be free to settle and work where they like within the Community, and this must happen a good deal more quickly than the Draft Statute foresees. But there must also be a policy which will provide for full employment.

There must a high and stable level of demand, involving the co-ordination of national budget and monetary policies, and to some extent also of social policies (social insurance taxes, for instance), and there must be a European executive authority to see that the co-ordination happens. There must also be a policy for replacing industries weakened or destroyed by competition in the new open market, and for developing the underdeveloped areas in the South and East. (It is not enough, as the liberals tried to argue, to leave capital free to flow to the point of most profitable use. There must be a positive all-European development policy as well.)

And that brings me back to the British. Britain is officially, formally, and very closely involved in the new Europe. At the Coal-Steel headquarters, the British delegates are as much at home as those from any of the Six. If and when EDC is established, Britain has under-

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taken to do everything short of formally joining it. And here at the Hague was a discussion which might have seemed deliberately directed to remove those fears which have held many people in Britain back from supporting full British membership of the European community at least on the economic side.

We were afraid of losing full employment, or of having to face new depressed areas. Good; the European Movement has met these objections. And in so doing it has left British opponents of supra-national economic authority without a leg to stand on. For we in Britain know from our own experience that to defeat unemployment and avoid inflation it is necessary to have an over-all policy for the whole of each economic unit, that is, of each area with a common market, and this policy must be enforced by an executive authority democratically responsible to a Parliament.

And yet, there we British delegates were. About half-a-dozen of us. The elderly banker mentioned, the General Secretary of a union whose standing in the TUC is not of the highest, a couple of delegates from the European Youth Campaign, a minor politician or two. Not even a second-rank political figure, least of all from the Conservative Party, so prominently represented at the Hague in 1948. Sir Winston Churchill, Mr. Eden, and Lord Salisbury spoke at the Conservative Party Conference during or just after the Hague Congress: none of them referred to it, though Sir Winston was persuaded at least to send the Congress his formal good wishes. The British press practically ignored it.

The British tendency to concentrate on relations with Europe at the official level is not merely silly but catastrophic. For these relations lose much of their value just because in Britain the European movement (note the small "m") lacks the soul which only an unofficial organization of enthusiasts can provide.

What strikes one most at a meeting such as that held at the Hague is to find himself among men and women who have absorbed the European idea into their political and social personality. People who are ready to leave the technicalities to the technicians, to brush aside academic debates about planning and freedom, federation or confederation, to recognize that there already exists wide agreement on the outlines of a European Community, and to demand, with full and mature responsibility, that the decisions of principle about it be taken now.

Wide areas of the European public are still very poorly informed about what the European idea means. But there is, above all in the Six, this responsible, enthusiastic, and also strong influential body of those who already understand and have faith in that idea. And it is they who have been, and will remain, the driving force when ministers and diplomats find excuses for delay.

MICHAEL P. FOGARTY.

FROM ISRAEL

Majority and Minorities

AFTER you hear so much talk in Israel about the "in-gathering of the exiles," the fulfillment of the prophecies and other essentially theocratic ideas, you naturally begin to wonder about the non-Jews in the new State. I asked a government spokesman about it. He insisted that the religious rights of all citizens are democratically protected. Christians are free to go to their own churches and the Moslem population carries on without restrictions. "We have on file," the government man said, "letters from every religious leader in Israel attesting to the freedom they enjoy here." Later I noticed in the *Jerusalem Post* the listings for religious services held on Sunday in Christian churches. I attended Sunday Mass myself at the Terra Sancta College, a Franciscan institution which has now been largely taken over—after satisfactory arrangements were made with the Franciscans—by the Hebrew University. On the surface everything goes well. But there is an undercurrent of ill-feeling among the religious minorities in Israel which no observer can miss for long.

This is not a matter of law, as in Spain, say, or in other places where there are frank religious disabilities. Rather it is a question of atmosphere. Catholic nuns and priests, for instance, complain of being viciously insulted—even spit at—on the streets and mocked even by quite small children. Perhaps this sort of thing is inevitable where one religious group predominates so strongly. Certainly there have been many times in our own country when bearded rabbis have been brutally held up to ridicule.

There are recurrent cases, too, of churches in Israel being desecrated—and this also, in many instances, can be ascribed to the kind of bigotry which in America is responsible for the desecration of synagogues and Jewish graveyards. (An added Christian complaint in Israel is that the authorities seem to take no measures to stop these outrages.) In a word, it seems that the same kind of fanaticism and almost psychotic ill-will that are turned into anti-Semitic channels in the U.S. are manifested in anti-Christian outbursts over here.

More serious because it is more official is the periodic destruction of Christian Arab villages by Israeli military authorities. Just two years ago, the Catholic Arab village of Ikret, for instance, was wholly demolished.

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The people of Ikret had been sent away from the village, by military order, for "security" reasons. They were promised that they would be permitted to return in only a few weeks. A couple of years passed while these Arab Catholics—themselves Israeli citizens—waited in their bare, comfortless temporary quarters. Finally they took the matter to the highest court of the land and were given a court order permitting them to return to their homes. That was just shortly before Christmas, 1951. But before they could move back to their homes, Israeli airplanes dropped bombs on their abandoned town, destroying everything.

Whether from malice or not no one can say, but the date chosen for the destruction of this wholly Christian village was December 25th. This may have revealed no more than an utter lack of sensitivity on the part of the military authorities, but certainly it added insult to injury. The "incident" brought forth a formal letter of protest from Archbishop George Hakkim of the Greek Catholic diocese of Acre, Haifa, Nazareth and the rest of Galilee to the Israeli Minister of Religions. The "Christmas present" of 1951 will long be bitterly remembered by Israel's Christians.

Only within the past few weeks a similar incident was publicized, though it took place last September. Kafr-Biram, another Catholic village, was destroyed. Here again the parish church was violently pillaged, as in Ikret, and the debris sold for junk. Israeli Catholics regarded the destruction of the church as a wholly unnecessary desecration.

In both cases, the reason offered for the destruction of the Catholic villages was "military security." This, of course, is a military question. The layman hesitates to offer an opinion. As is so often true in such matters, the Israeli military's reasoning sounds plausible. Nevertheless the repetition of such drastic "security measures" does not make the small Christian minority in Israel feel very secure.

THE situation of Israelis involved in religiously-mixed marriages is especially difficult. Some of the Jews who came from Europe brought Christian wives and children with them. These families have encountered numerous social difficulties—especially the children. In many cases the pressures have been so strong that marriages have collapsed. A rabbinical divorce is granted, and the Christian partners, who belong neither to the Jewish majority nor to the large Arab minority in Israel, then find themselves in an almost hopeless predicament.

With so much emphasis being placed on the religious significance of the State, "mixed" couples naturally stand out as unsympathetic non-conformists. The same is true of Jews turned Christians. Such conversions are hard for the average Israeli to understand. The converted Jew has a hard row to hoe everywhere —this is surely understandable when one considers the pogrom-inspired conversions of history—but the convert in Israel is about as popular as the Communist in this country.

Despite this, the number in Israel asking for baptism from Christian clergymen is comparatively high. While I was visiting a priest, for instance, no less than three persons came knocking at his door in approximately one hour, and asked to be baptized. What they were really looking for was some kind of official document to establish themselves as Christians before the law. The way they approached the question, they might just as easily have gone to a Presbyterian parson as to a Roman Catholic priest. It was simply that they had reason to believe that becoming a Christian would make it easier for them to leave Israel. Naturally, in the circumstances, the priest declined politely to baptize them and explained that he could not accept them as converts with that kind of extraneous motivation. "Is this unusual?" I asked the priest. "No, I get this sort of thing every day," he replied.

The authorities over here are somewhat embarrassed by the increasing exodus from Israel. They explain it by saying that most of the people who want to leave now were never serious about being Israeli citizens in the first place. Such backsliders merely used Israel as a halfway house. These "exiles" allowed themselves to be "in-gathered" merely in order to get away from where they were and eventually get somewhere else, it is said. Of those who claim they are disillusioned with Israel, the government spokesmen say that they are "soft"; they never were the kind of settlers Israel wants. Other apologists point out that immigration to Israel during the first five years was unusual by any standards. From now on a more even balance will be established between people coming in and going out, as in other countries. Israel now has to stop and catch its breath, in order to absorb the people who have come in such great numbers during the past five years. In view of all

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this, it is held, there is nothing untoward in the fact that the number of persons leaving the country recently has outbalanced the number coming in.

THE largest minority group in Israel, of course, are the native Arabs. There are one hundred and seventy thousand of them, mostly Moslems. They have many complaints about their status as citizens. Whatever their legal equality, they say, they are treated as second-class Israelis and subjected to frightful discriminations and injustices. All Arabs, for instance, have to carry a special Class B identification card. This clearly marks them off as non-Jewish Israeli citizens at all times. Their movements are rigidly restricted; so are their job opportunities.

The Israeli spokesmen admit to some discrimination but argue that the Arab minority constitutes a special problem. After all, they say, even the Arabs in Israel are kinsmen to Israel's enemies; the Government would not feel safe without taking some special precautions in their regard. "Didn't you," they challenge us Americans, "herd your Japanese citizens into concentration camps during the war for the same reason?"

In the Arab villages in Israel not a civilian but a Military Governor exercises authority. This, too, is justified as a necessary precaution. There are, of course, all the usual feelings against the arrangement that people inevitably have when the military move in on civilians. "We are supposed to be equal citizens, but we are treated as if we were conquered enemies," one Arab told me. "Our towns are 'occupied' by the soldiers of what is supposed to be our own country."

Other Arab complaints hinge on the fact that many of them had to leave their own homes and villages during the war because they were in the battle zone. "We did not even leave Israel overnight but moved only a few miles away," they insist. In some cases, they say, they were actually ordered to leave by the Israeli military. Nevertheless their land and homes were subsequently classified as "absentee property," because they had left them. They are in the same position today as those Palestinian Arabs who actually left Israel and now languish in the refugee camps. They no longer have the use of their own property, which has been taken over by Jewish immigrants.

Still other complaints are focused on the differences in wage scale between Jewish and Arab Israelis, discrimination in the social services offered by the State and limitations placed on economic and educational opportunities. At the University, for instance, there are less than fifty Arab students.

It seems unlikely that there will be much improvement on this score as long as Arab-Jewish relations are poisoned as they are today. Hope for an early settlement between Israel and the Arab countries seems very dim. Certainly in the Arab countries we found little sense of urgency about reaching a settlement with Israel. "Someone has to begin," we would say to the Arabs. "What do you propose as an opening step?" "Let the Israelis abide by the UN resolutions," they would answer, "and we'll see."

Later, when we interviewed Moshe Sharett, Ben-Gurion's energetic young successor in Jerusalem, he began by saying: "We do want peace but we can hold out forever." He admitted that the Arab boycott and blockade has hurt Israel, but not mortally, he assured us. The Arabs, Moshe Sharett said, have to give up their "morbid hope" that economic collapse, a second round of war, the cutting off of foreign aid, or anything else will bring Israel to its knees.

The Arab leaders we talked to insisted that they would settle for nothing less than the repatriation of the refugees—or at least Israel's granting the principle of repatriation, whether or not the refugees actually returned. But Mr. Sharett said firmly: "They simply cannot return. It would be hypocritical even to 'grant the principle.' The sooner the refugees realize that they are not going to return, the better."

IN Israel, when you mention the UN resolutions the Arabs speak of, you get only a stony rejection or a lecture on how the Arabs themselves defied the UN when they moved against Israel after partition. What was taken by the sword, Ben-Gurion said not long ago, will have to be taken back by the sword. This in reference to the readjustment of the borders to pre-war lines, such as was recommended by the UN. (Such a readjustment would assure repatriation to several hundred thousand refugees.) "Whoever heard of a nation relinquishing territory won by blood, turning it back to the enemy?" they ask in Israel when you bring this up.

The Israelis are also adamant against the internationalization of Jerusalem, which was approved by the UN and is openly favored by the Vatican and certain other Christian spokesmen. Recently the capital of Israel was moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. If nothing else, this was surely a kind of ultimate anti-internationalization gesture.

Until one reaches Jordan, he finds Arab spokesmen favoring the UN's internationalization resolution. But the Jordanians, who actually hold most of the Christian holy places—only three or four minor shrines are located in Israeli territory—are just as firmly opposed to this particularly resolution as the Israelis themselves. Is is their one point of agreement.

The Israelis argue that there is no reason to believe that the shrines in their territory will not always be accessible to devout pilgrims of every faith. "The question of shrines has nothing to do with politics," they

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say. This, despite the fact that most Arab Christians do not today have access to the shrines in Israeli territory and the Israeli Jews themselves are not able to visit their Wailing Wall, which is on the Jordan side.

They are willing to consider the internationalization of the holy places themselves, the Israeli spokesmen say, but Jerusalem must remain in their hands. The same arguments, more or less, are heard in the Arab sector. The Jordanians merely add that the Arabs for centuries, though they are predominantly Moslem, have permitted Christians free entry and access to the Holy Places. "We wonder," they say, "whether Moslem shrines would have been as well protected in Christian hands."

Those who favor internationalization insist that Jerusalem would belong to the three faiths even if every Holy Place there were bombed and destroyed tomorrow. The City, itself, they argue, occupies a central place in the faith, history, liturgy of Christian, Jew and Moslem alike. It is not essentially a matter of internationalizing shrines. It is the City which is the focal point of pilgrimage. The City, it is argued, belongs to the Moslem-Jewish-Christian world. Christian rights there are based on a thousand-year-old claim. If any place on earth should be internationalized, Jerusalem is it.

But as long as the new State is thought of in essentially mystical terms, an Israel without Jerusalem as an integral part would be a monstrosity, in the Israeli view. And, according to the Arabs, to cut off Jerusalem from Jordan would be like cutting off New York from the U.S., London from England, or Paris from France.

ODDLY enough, though we mentioned that we had visited Kibya while in Jordan, no one in Israel asked what we had found there. Understandably, perhaps, when "Kibya" came up, we encountered an obvious tendency to minimize the "incident" and turn the subject to less touchy matters. Among a few responsible Israeli leaders we talked to, there was a frank recognition that the Kibya affair reflected badly on Israel and went a long way toward alienating world opinion. We also found some half-hearted expressions of regret that innocent persons "had to suffer." (Most of the victims were women and children.) Practically no one seriously argued that the action was a purely civilian, spontaneous outbreak. Some, only half apologetically, even spoke of its being understandable that tensed-up soldiers would from time to time take "drastic steps" against murderous Arab "infiltrators." There were, of course, no forthright admissions that the massacre was carried out by the Israeli army. The official position of the Government—despite contradictory UN findings—is that the "cold-blooded murder" (as it was described in the United Nations report) was carried out by private citizens. But no one in authority in Israel has proposed that these murderous private citizens be tracked down and punished. As was true in the earlier case of the frightful Deir Yassin massacre, and in the killing of UN Mediator, Count Bernadotte, "terrorists" have gone scot-free again. Worst of all, apparently no one in authority is even vaguely interested in apprehending them.

JOHN COGLEY.

THE STAGE

OH, MEN! OH, WOMEN!

EDWARD Chodorov's play is so wise and elegant, so prodigal of sense and sensibility, that one's first impulse is to ask, ungraciously and with a good measure of humiliation, who is Mr. Chodorov? He is regarded generally, I recall, as a "good craftsman," a mild melodramatist and farceur, but hardly the superior playwright who has composed "Oh, Men! Oh, Women!" Nothing in my vague recollections of his work had prepared me for the intellectual tact and discretion of this new piece, the resilient quality of its feeling, or the fine comic perception of American manners which gives it so much authority and pertinence.

"Oh, Men! Oh, Women!" (an unfortunate title perhaps, but as we see, rueful, and appropriate) turns on the classic psychoanalytic joke ("The Patient's Revenge" it might be called) about the analyst suddenly implicated in the disorder of the life from which he must maintain a chaste distance. Mr. Chodorov does not penetrate his theme as deeply as he might: there is something a little tentative and unformed about the implications of his last scene, though this is perhaps an index of modesty and integrity more than anything. But the observation is so exact and vivacious (I do not imagine psychoanalysis has ever been so honorably satirized, with such a freedom from cant) and the play's moral intelligence so adult and reflective that Mr. Chodorov disarms objection. The playwright has, moreover, fashioned a theatrical arena for several wonderfully egotistic star turns: Anne Jackson's supremely delicious recital—imprisoned on the confessional couch—of her midnight marital hassles; Larry Blyden's amazingly witty sketch of a truculent young man brought at last to psychoanalysis but fighting it tooth and nail, and the alcoholic bravado with which Gig Young states the case against Ibsen and "A Doll's House."

The narrative in which these scenes are set poses rational man (Franchot Tone's agreeable analyst) against irrational woman (Betsy von Furstenberg's light and irresistible knucklehead) and then contemplates whether there is any hope of reconciliation. Here Mr.

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Chodorov's true distinction emerges: the fact that he is a playwright who never cheats. There is an extraordinary delicacy in the persuasive charm with which Mr. Chodorov urges us to certain commitments, a lack of pressure which is most winning. His play is an illustration of the maligned liberal and humane sentiments in action. It also shows how the nuances of American life and manners, to which our big bow-wow bulldogs are so often blind, are accessible to the simple, modest imagination which is aware of, confesses, and accepts its limitations. (*At the Henry Miller.*)

THE PRESCOTT PROPOSALS

MISS Katharine Cornell has chosen to return in a glossy international *pièce bien faite,* full of naive political trumpery, vulgar intelligence, and a cold facile charm. Messrs. Lindsay and Crouse have, indeed, put together a play which sustains inspection at no point, and is largely dedicated to fostering the illusion of contemporaneity: there are succulent references to scandal in high places, bald endorsements of global amity ("But the Russians *must* be human!") and a prevailing tone of frantic significance ("Washington is on the wire, Mrs. Prescott . . . Has the Secretary cleared my speech yet . . . ") *Sardoodledum* Shaw would have called it, but tarted up here with the frowsy anxieties of the Cold War: boulevard drama at best, possibly well done but—who can deny it?—hardly worth doing.

I have perhaps overstated the attack: the evening is never less than competent. There are effective caricatures of national types: a parfit, gentil Britisher, a volatile Gaul, the omniscient Pakistani padding about those desolate UN halls, and an obstreperous Muscovite. Miss Cornell herself gives a performance rich in feeling and personal resource, but dramatically—it is very hard to say this—not quite distinguished. Her portrait of an American woman of affairs is begun with energy and boldness but—for sheer lack of substance—declines unhappily into a mannered exhibition of private charm. (It is usually impertinent for the critic to suggest elisions in a performance, but there can be small doubt that the actress would be well advised to omit the excessive head-clutching which constitutes so much of the visual detail of her interpretation.) The fault is, of course, chiefly that of the authors, but it points again the melancholy impasse of players like Miss Cornell: performers whose gifts demand the fullness and potentiality of the classic repertoire, but who are confined to such arid trivia as "The Prescott Proposals" by the absence in this country of any positive *milieu* for theater. Miss Cornell is only the most recent sacrifice to this lamentable and vicious want, but very possibly she is the saddest. (*At the Broadhurst.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

The Humanism of Henri Bremond

ALASTAIR GUINAN

FATHER Tyrrell, who knew the Abbé Henri Brémond well, declared in a letter averring his own bent to be *puritanical and Miltonian,* that the Frenchman's interest in religion was *artistic.* The characterization may well stand; it is in fact, luminously expressive of the contrasting ways in which men display, one the prophetical, another the mystical, element in religious thought. These elements are strikingly exemplified in the personalities and careers of these two friends. Both had been Jesuits; but M. Brémond, who survived Fr. Tyrrell by almost a quarter of a century, remained until his death within the visible Catholic unity which had disowned the somewhat tempestuously articulate Anglo-Irish writer prior to his passing in 1909.

The emphasis placed by M. Brémond upon the artistic element or characteristic in religion is — we can scarcely be wrong in so putting it—best described as an appreciative sharing in the creative spirit of the God Who so constituted human nature as to make man that varied and wonderful being who is truly a microcosm of the universe. Whereas Tyrrell's office, as he felt it to be, was largely that of one urged to activity by a need and a burning desire *to make the crooked straight and the rough places plain,* Brémond was content with the work of depicting man as he exists, and he delighted in drawing those life-like picturizations which fill the pages of his great work, the *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux.*

Tyrrell's effort, in the main, won the repudiation of authority; Brémond's less spectacular contribution to religious thought is, in its full significance, little understood by many pedestrian minds, although it gains renewed justification whenever—as in the recent definition of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin—the *humanistic* tone of Christian belief is stressed.

HENRI Brémond was born at Aix-en-Provence on 31 July 1865 and he died at Arthez d'Asson on 17 August 1933. The sixty-eight years of his life were devoted to study and writing. A priest of exemplary life and of such depth of devotional temperament as is rarely met with, he never exercised a pastoral charge

Mr. Guinan contributes to scholarly journals in both Europe and America. This article will appear in a fuller form in the "Harvard Theological Review" early this year.

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in the accepted sense familiar to American Catholics. His years as a Jesuit, which included a term of teaching, were mainly spent on the staff of the Society's great French periodical, *Etudes*. He also engaged in the work of preaching, notably at Athens where, in 1900, he first met one who was to be a life-long friend, M. Maurice Barrès.

After Brémond's withdrawal from the Jesuits, with the consent of the Superiors, in 1904, and his affiliation with the diocese of his birth, Aix-en-Provence, he remained largely a "free lance." His personal resources made it unnecessary that he seek merely diocesan employment, and the great world of letters was his pulpit and parish. Like his friend the Abbé Ernest Dimnet, he represented and exemplified magnificently a type of the priesthood—scholarly, cultured, generous in the manifestation of real interest in the intellectual problems besetting lesser students, and always willing to help by word and guidance, overt or indirect as might more fitly suit the individual case. From the broadly social point of view, and apart from the answer which his life in the priesthood affords for a man's own spiritual growth and expression, this kind of man is one of the most reassuring of the signs mirroring God's governance of His creation, and manifests in every deed how He draws it to Himself through the personalities and work of the elect souls chosen to reveal to their fellows the essentially divine element in human life.

Brémond was easily among the supreme few in his generation who stood in the top rank of those who *commend* Christianity to the age. His picture of religion and of its working on the spirit of man is at once winning and attractive as well as true; for he shows us Christianity not as the rigorists do—an attempt, foredoomed to failure, to turn the man of the day into the *superman* of pious chronicle—but as the expression of divine grace interpenetrating the stuff of human nature, itself the most awe-inspiring work of God's creative hand. "In funiculis Adam traham vos . . ." the Abbé might have said of his own work.

Through M. Brémond's pages we come to realize his deep conviction that the life of devotion may be lived under what are outwardly the most unlikely conditions. Not alone the cloister, but the busy marts of commerce, the courts of princes, the camps of soldiers, the book-lined rooms of scholars—all can be made fit fostering places for the Word of God if only man will water and tend the seedlings sown by the spirit of divine grace.

This is, of course, the doctrine of Saint Francis de Sales. But what the Bishop of Geneva enunciated in his writings and put into practice in his own life, M. Brémond has further traced for us in the work of the great fact of God's economy for man as it is seen fulfilling itself in the lives of countless other men and women, like ourselves in their needs, urges, and efforts, howsoever different the outward seeming of their lives may appear. These men and women we meet in the Abbé's pages become as known and familiar to us as the men and women we encounter in our daily lives. We behold not only their actions and outward strivings but, now and again, through M. Brémond's deft analysis, the secret, sometimes deeply hidden, springs of their reactions to the forces and personalities they contact.

Yet the Abbé Brémond wrote no *definitive* biographies: his portraits of others are the more natural and true for possessing not only the "warts" and failings of their long dead prototypes but even strange and life-like flashes of that mercurial and volatile quality which distinguishes a conscious and sentient being from the poor thing pinned down in the exhibitor's case. None of M. Brémond's subjects is quite complete, nor is any one, in a certain sense, wholly satisfying: he refrained always from the unconscious blasphemy of the average biographer who vainly seeks to outdo Divinity by presenting a perfectly finished picture of a human being —a creature who is, after all, essentially the expression of something wholly incommunicable.

Brémond knew better; what we see through his eyes is the ebb and flow of a personality, "an inextricable network of which, after long pondering, we know very little, and," as he continues, "before which even the most assured confidence in its own ability to penetrate the maze must realize that to God alone are the innermost secrets revealed." Indeed, when Wilfrid Ward sought to express the so-called *failure* of Brémond's attempt to portray Newman, by declaring in his famous *Dublin Review* article that "ingenious writing cannot unravel a complex personality, though it may heighten the colors of its apparent contradictions," the critic was in reality but stating in the baldest and most convincing terms the merit of M. Brémond's method. For not Mr. Ward himself, nor any other biographer who has ever lived, has yet succeeded in satisfactorily "unravelling a complex personality" while preserving the design of the whole. After a given measure of such work, what the unravellers leave on our hands is a tangled skein of thread, most of whose knots are of the too-ambitious biographer's devising. Brémond, on his side, could say that far from wishing to reduce his subject to a lifeless handful of woolen thread, he was recording only what he saw at the moment, and was not attempting to exhaust the subject.

In this respect for the core of the human personality, for that mysterious factor which defies analysis and which will always elude probing curiosity, Brémond showed the depth of his comprehension of that organic concept of man which the historians of philosophy and psychology call Thomistic. Indeed, his work revealed how profoundly he had penetrated into the richness of that concept. For him the curious interplay of higher and lower nature, the distress or conformity which body and

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spirit feel variously toward one another, is no evidence of a dichotomy, but rather affords a revealing glimpse into the life-generating friction which brings into play the full force of those richly divergent and equally valuable constituents in the nature of the being whom God had willed to make, as Richard West said, "part mortal clay and part ethereal fire."

A STORY is told of a little Presbyterian girl of a past generation who was spending her holidays with a contemporary who was a member of the Church of England. During the church service one day, a phrase from the beautiful Anglican liturgy—those words in the General Confession, "we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep . . . and there is no health in us"—made an impression upon the visitor, and later, in trying to explain to her friend some of the religious differences which divided them, she recollected the words in conjunction with a thought from the severe Calvinistic doctrine of her own spiritual guides. The somewhat peculiar blend which the two notions had produced in her mind resulted in the rather horrifying and seemingly shameless declaration: "You, as an Anglican, may be lost and erring, even an unhealthy sheep; but I am a Presbyterian, and I am totally depraved."

The notion of the total depravity of human nature—which many modern Presbyterians have themselves rejected—implies a reading of theology and of history which never appealed to M. Brémond, and his attitude toward erring sheep was patterned on the act of the Good Shepherd, Who goes into the wilderness that He may find that which was lost.

This breadth of sympathy with all aspects of God's creation, and the disposition to see in them the basic goodness which cries out for fostering development are illustrated not only in the great history of religious thought which the Abbe Brémond began in 1914 and the eleventh volume of which he had completed before his death, but also by his other works as well.

M. Brémond produced on those who knew him in his own life-time the pleasant impression of contact with a tall, handsome man of considerable charm of personality, one in whom underlying kindliness and geniality counteracted a certain surface air of somewhat austere ecclesiastical dignity. His successor in the *Académie francaise,* M. André Bellesort, said of him that "his eyes were of a gentle sweetness, seeming to gaze beyond what was apparent. His lips were marked by a smile almost feminine in its allurement and charm, and his head was Roman in austerity and delicacy of line."

One of M. Brémond's most intimate friends, the Abbé Ernest Dimnet, who for years occupied an adjoining apartment to that of M. Brémond in the old Paris house in the rue Chanoinesse where M. Dimnet still lives, has written of the beauty of Brémond's voice and of the rich vein of humor in which he conversed. "Toward ideas", remarks M. Dimnet, "he displayed an ironic frankness which could be rather frightening; but toward personalities he could not be other than he naturally was— the charitable Christian and the gentleman."

HENRI Brémond had a genius for friendship and for loyalty. It manifested itself in his generous—and, as events transpired, misunderstood—action at the grave of George Tyrrell. The private prayers he said there for his friend were misinterpreted by the Bishop of Southwark, who had forbidden a public funeral service for the Modernist outcast, and Brémond's act of charity resulted in a censure being laid upon him. But the Abbé's own Ordinary, Monseigneur Bonnefoy of Aix, was of a different temper than Dr. Amigo of Southwark, and all was eventually straightened out at Rome.

The troubled career of Abbé Alfred Firmin Loisy and the unhappy consequences which flowed from his incursions against the advice of the more astute Abbé Duchesne into the checkered fields of the higher criticism of the Scriptures, did not destroy Brémond's friendly regard for Loisy the man as Loisy the exegete was condemned, and we find Brémond writing to Loisy to the last. It was Loisy who, some three years after Brémond's death, paid high tribute to his friend when he said with simple eloquence: "The future will accord him greater glory than did his contemporaries. Through his work he will continue to exercise his noble and inspiring influence, and he is to be numbered among those of whom one may say with the Evangelist that their 'God is a God of the living and not of the dead; for all to Him', in Him, and for Him, 'are alive for evermore.' "

Another instance of M. Brémond's breadth of mind, and his loyalty of affection when once deliberately given, is seen in his friendship with Maurice Barrès whose known independence in religious matters did not interfere with their long association and high mutual regard.

The richness of his learning, his quality of sympathy and understanding, the superb perfection of his own French prose style, all subserved in the life and work of M. Brémond his realization of the cardinal note marking a human life lived in accordance with its nature, that the active presence of God breeds divinity within us even before our own efforts turn consciously in His direction: "L' active présence de Dieu nous divinise à notre insu." Henri Brémond himself is seen by us to have most truly and pithily summed up the regard in which he held all things,—life and death alike, life for our brief day and life for the long to-morrow,—as we watch him writing in his Greek Testament these words from Cardinal Newman's *Dream of Gerontius:* "Lover of souls, great God, I look to Thee!"

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A Man of the Connecticuts

WEEPING CROSS. By Henry Longan Stuart. Regnery. $4.

By RILEY HUGHES

THE historical novel as it is customarily practiced is the flimsiest exercise in flagrant make-believe. Debased coinage in language, decolletage, and anachronistic sentiments—pointing away from the time of its events to the time of its writing—are this hybrid's chief ingredients. "Mr. King Louis, sir," says the honest young American to Louis XVI, "I've been in France only two weeks, but I don't like the look of things. Trouble is brewing." But indolent Louis saunters out, munching on a pear. And in the very next chapter the Bastille falls. Or else the hero succeeds in turning history's course, though, always, others gain the credit. Through the hitherto unknown hero of Shellabarger's *Lord Vanity,* it now appears, Wolfe bested Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham.

Weeping Cross, by Henry Longan Stuart, one of The Commonweal's original editors, is one of that rare and select company of historical fictions which can be read without embarrassment—and without tears for poor, maligned history. In this remarkable *tour de force,* seventeenth-century language and attitudes come together to tell a story which invents no new twists for man's record, but which gives mighty and convincing circumstances to a familiar landscape. To the Boston of 1652, "an homely English town full of thrift and populousness," comes Richard Fitzsimon, Irishman, Papist, aristocrat, cavalier. His life has been spared him through intervention with Cromwell, and he has been sent to the Colony to be an indentured servant for ten years. Years after the events he describes in this memoir, Fitzsimon was to be a Jesuit, but even as he looks back with charity and understanding on those enforced neighbors and masters of his, he cannot help thinking of them as "starveling tinkers and weavers." Yet although the fastidiousness of the aristocrat never left him, he was without cavalier pride and swagger, even in his most worldly moments.

That fastidiousness and the lack of pride motivated by his faith and humility were both to be cruelly mocked. After two months during which he "garbished Boston streets," Richard was given to a Mr. Fleming of the Connecticuts to be a manual laborer. First he had to suffer that a leather collar be placed about his neck, the harbinger of many indignities. Soon Agnes Bartlett, Fleming's daughter, a widow, and some few years older than Richard, yoked him more thoroughly, with jibes and taunts at the beginning, and then with a passionate love. Fitzsimon does not spare himself in his account of this servitude, nor does he minimize his own eager willingness, his fits of remorse, his guilty joys. Agnes is no symbolic phantom for him but a real woman, capricious, scornful, masterly.

But their love is, on many levels,

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a foul betrayal; of Fitzsimon's implicit vows to celibacy, to old Fleming's trust. The warfare between the lovers becomes as gigantic as their love. In the end Richard, sneered at, despised, is brought to trial as "a rogue and vagabond, an undisciplined and incorrigible person." He is avenged ironically and terribly; the settlement is raided and sacked by Indians, the survivors believing that it was done by order of the Jesuits who are "bidden succor" him. Richard knows at the last, after privation and insult, after a love at length made lawful and then cruelly lost, "how slight threads can be knit by God's fingers."

This remarkable book—powerful, witty, and compelling in its events—has had a curious history. First published in 1908, it was ignored; the posthumous second edition of 1933 was little better received. Sigrid Undset, writing in 1935, said that the book's cool reception on first publication was owing to the fact that non-Catholics found it "puzzling and repellent" because "it deals with *sin,*" and Catholics—"infected by the puritanical system of suppression" were "scandalized." In his introduction to the present edition Paul C. Cuneo offers the suggestion that a public nurtured on Undset, Mauriac, Bernanos, and Greene may give this book the recognition so long (despite the generous advocacy of Theodore Maynard and others) denied it. It is suggestive and perhaps prophetic that this is the first of a projected series to be published under the title "Books to Live."

Furtive Marks on Paper

UNDERCLIFF: Poems 1946-1953. By Richard Eberhart. Oxford. $4.

By GERALD WEALES

NO group of poems produced over a period of time, even a limited period of seven years, can serve as a philosophical testament, however much a critic might wish that such were the case. How neat and clean would be the workings of the poet, and how easy the work of the reviewer, if each poem could be considered part of an ideational system. The poet's order, however, is not that of the philosopher; each poem has its own unity, but its connection with others from the same source lies only in the accident of the poet's mind. Inevitably Richard Erberhart, the accident in this case, returns to particular ideas in *Undercliff,* as he recurs to favorite words—*integer,* for instance.

His first preoccupation is with a definition, perhaps more accurately a recognition, of man. In many of the poems in the first section of the book the subject is death, sometimes as a release, sometimes as a revelation, but always as a limiting factor; death is the necessary attribute of humanity.

> For though we give ourselves completely
> It is only to find ourselves the more,
> And though we tremble to touch the Host
> It is the flesh that closes fast the door.

There is no defeat in this revelation, for throughout Eberhart's poetry runs the reaching out of man's spirit. It is just that the spirit, so long as it remains human, can reach only a short way. At the end of "The Horse Chestnut Tree," man becomes like the little boys driven from the tree by dusk with not nearly all the prizes that the tree had to offer,

> With the great flowering world unbroken yet,
> Which we held in idea, a little handful.

His talk of destiny, although at times in "Letter I" it sounds close to determinism, appears to be acceptance of the fact of mortality.

Within this mortal frame, then, moves man who is double-natured. The old concept of the joining of the bestial and the spiritual in man is apparent in the poet's continual return to the idea of "forked" or "cleft" being; it is present in the images of sea and sky in "Seals, Terns, Time" and of sea and mountains in "Chiliasm." There is not, however, an attempt to throw off one of these natures for the other, but an acceptance of both. Only when they are defined in terms of intellect and passion, or order and disorder, does Eberhart take sides. In "Phoenixes Again" two poets who have decided to reduce a poem, or life, to rational terms fail to do so; it ends:

> And I would with my praise
> Subdue the mind to flesh's parity . . .

Here there is not so much a disclaimer of man's intellectuality as a reduction of it in size, an insistence that it should share the stage of man with the passions. The ordering principles of reason are forsaken for something greater that breaks too careful definition[illegible] in "The Forms of the Human," where the wild bean flower is saved for its beauty. Often it is action or movement that is contrasted to thought. In "Letter 1" in the section on the philosopher Eberhart writes:

> . . . the mechanic in the aircraft factory,

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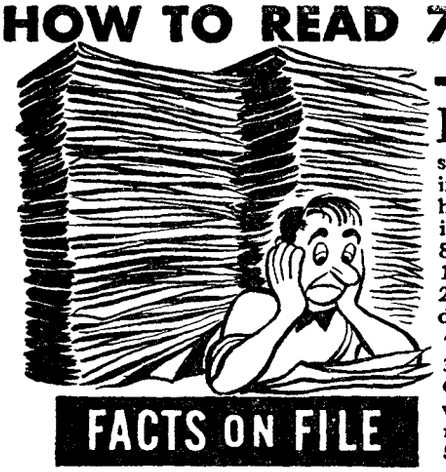

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Turning his bolts in the desuetude of hours, and of years,
Understanding of the gigantic implication
Of which his wrenching is the implementation,
May be nearer to the truth than you will ever be . . .

It is ironic that so much of Eberhart's poetry, which celebrates the passions over the mind, should be so tightly intellectual. Sometimes his ideas are closely packed, logically worked out like those in the more intensely intellectual poems of Wallace Stevens. At his best, like Stevens, Eberhart gives poetic flesh to the processes of thought; occasionally, as in some of the longer poems in the second section of this volume, the workings of the mind banish the poet's vision. In "Fragment of New York, 1929" Eberhart manages to use his intellectualizing and to disown it; the musings of the poet-workman, who finds the analogy between the slaughterhouse and the world, who considers the movements of his unthinking fellow workers as those of dead men, serve the poem and then are rejected after a struggle ("See still I fret about the mind.").

In "The Dry Rot" the poet asks some future archeologist sifting his bones to "Think of dialectic, imagination, the Rose of Venus." Here, then, a third element—imagination—joins the other two. Many of the poems in the third section of the book deal with this subject. It appears to be the connective between the other two, the often ephemeral realization of the combining nature of man and of the aspiration of that combination. This is depicted metaphorically in the striving of the "Grape Vine Shoots," is stated baldly in "Choosing a Monument": "And the seed of man surely shall prevail." In "Letter 1" the philosopher and the scientist are rejected; so too is music for providing a harmony too far from the human. The poet is saved, for he (and imagination) comes closest to seeing man most clearly. As Eberhart says in another poem:

May not a furtive mark on paper
Speak for the dignity of man?

If there is to be a dignity and a prevalence of the spirit it comes apparently through love, for again and again Eberhart returns to that theme. "Choosing a Monument": "The forms of love do not matter, but love matters." "Baudelaire" fails in his vision because "Love, the source, I failed to honour."

Eberhart's poetry then deals with a vision of man that emphasizes his mortality without losing a note of affirmation, but to have defined the subject of the poems is not to have defined the poetry itself. Some things may be said about the poems. In ideas they are complex without obscurity. Despite a variety of metrical forms, the rhythms are mostly simple, the impact immediate. The diction, except for journeys into the language of philosophy and science, some of which are taken for satiric effect, is unusually clear and is often startlingly apt. Eberhart's metaphors and analogies are frequently of the homeliest nature—the almost Frost-

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like boys with the chestnut tree, for instance—involving most often nature; sometimes he seems too intent on explaining away his analogy rather than letting it speak for itself, although he seems to recognize this as he says in "Sea Scape With Parable," smiling, one hopes, "So by the inevitable analogy . . ." He has a wit that plays through many of the poems, sometimes grabbing at a pun; in the "Sea Scape" the fish, sent by God are called "holy mackerel." Sometimes the wit of a line is so sharp and sudden that Donne would have been glad to have written it ("Death I saw and wormed through it."), yet it does not lose contemporaneousness or sound like anyone but Eberhart. Sometimes he juxtaposes ancient and modern for fine comic effect ("somdel Groddeckian") or twists a familiar line to suggest a fuller meaning ("Ripeness is gall.")

This clocking of poetic characteristics is, like the discussion of subject matter, no more than a gesture toward the poetry. The poet must finally speak for himself. *Undercliff* has enough good poems in it to make us stop and listen when Eberhart speaks.

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People of Clay

THE PONDER HEART. By Eudora Welty. Harcourt. $3.

By EDWIN KENNEBECK

EVERY novelist can be called "regional," and there is only a question of whether he flies his local colors to get attention or, like Eudora Welty, uses them to dress human beings becomingly. Miss Welty writes mostly of the South and is able to suggest what Lionel Trilling calls "a culture's hum and buzz of implication . . . the whole evanescent context in which its explicit statements are made."

If ever a group of people lived in a private context of their own, it is the population of her fictional town of Clay, Mississippi. Edna Earle Ponder is our narrator, a gentle old maid of about fifty, who struggles to keep high the standards of her community; after all, it is the world that is out of step, not Clay. Her first mission, however, is to protect her Uncle Daniel, a wealthy leading citizen, from truth. "Oh, he hates sickness and death, will hardly come into the same room with it!" Uncle Daniel is not much older than she, and he spills over with love and generosity for anyone who will accept them. "He loved being happy. He loved happiness like I love tea." Clay knows its boundaries and is proud to keep within them. Uncle Daniel Ponder, knowing his, nonetheless reaches for stars, wanting to give them away. The Ponder heart is slow to learn that stars are not available.

Uncle Daniel, after one unsuccessful marriage, tries a second, with a blank-brained young thing named Bonnie Dee Peacock. The story tells of their marriage, which ends with Bonnie Dee's death by heart failure during a thunderstorm. After her funeral the Peacock family brings a

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charge of murder against Uncle Daniel. He *was* involved in Bonnie Dee's death. As his young wife sat on the davenport frightened by lightning, he gently tickled her until she buried her head in a cushion and died of terror and laughter.

At the trial Uncle Daniel, eager as always to tell his story before a receptive audience, is about to condemn himself — he could hardly realize that he might be punished for his love—but Edna Earle manages to keep him quiet. She lies on his behalf, and he is acquitted. Truth, up to the end of the story, does not quite catch up with Uncle Daniel.

This is a beautifully constructed tale, brief, almost faultless in tone, and, like most of Miss Welty's writing, kept interesting by an easy and authoritative use of idiom. Not legend, but an exaggerated step above simple story, it is brightened by the Welty kind of humor that, to my taste, does not become really comic enough (except in a short story like "Why I Live at the P. O."). Affection and wisdom surrounded *The Ponder Heart;* one does not have to assent to any of its follies. But there is no explicit passion and darkness to save it from a threat of preciousness. Even the grisly story of Bonnie Dee's death fails to break completely through the mist of implication. "Tell the truth slant" when that is most effective; if you slant it frequently the truth becomes a game. Uncle Daniel's simplicity, his easy recovery from the loss of his wife, Edna Earle's lie, her own relation to reality, a general air of sexlessness — they stand waiting for recognition and analysis. But by the time one has "figured it all out," there is little dismay or conviction left. There remains, however, the humor and warmheartedness, and a handsome glitter of technique.

REVIEWERS

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A Look at the Record

One good way to take in the nature and range of The Commonweal at a glance is to look over some of the high spots of the past year.

JANUARY: Douglas Hyde described "The Death of a Communist," and Will Herberg analyzed Soviet anti-Semitism.

FEBRUARY: Frederick D. Wilhelmsen's controversial "The Conservative Catholic," and J. L. Tallenay's appreciation of the films of Charles Chaplin.

MARCH: Hannah Arendt wrote on "The Ex-Communists" in a widely-discussed article, and Sean O'Faolain contrasted the temper of the Irish with that of the Latins.

APRIL: George N. Shuster's "Academic Freedom," Frederick N. Flynn on the problem of Anti-Clericalism, and Chester Bowles on the situation in Asia.

MAY: Evelyn Waugh wrote on Tito, Donat O'Donnell examined the fiction of Francois Mauriac, and Mauriac himself wrote on the subject of his own novels.

JUNE: Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn described "The Catholic Reactionary," and John Cogley discussed the question of Catholicism and American Democracy as part of The Commonweal's notable series on "Catholicism in America."

JULY: "Being an Irish Writer" by Sean O'Faolain, and "Love Among the Ruins," a new short novel by Evelyn Waugh.

AUGUST: Michael Harrington's "The Rights of the Guilty," and Joseph E. Cunneen on Catholic education.

SEPTEMBER: Father Victor White defended the principle of religious tolerance, and Bishop John J. Wright wrote on "After the Brave New World."

OCTOBER: Milton Mayer's personal manifesto, "Sit THIS One Out?" and Thomas Merton's "The Psalms as Poetry."

NOVEMBER: "Catholic Isolationism" was examined by James O'Gara, and Father Martin E. Schirber and Emerson Hynes outlined "A New Farm Policy." Father H. A. Reinhold wrote on "The Future of the Liturgy."

DECEMBER: Christopher Dawson on "Education and the Christian Culture," Donat O'Donnell on "Why the Swedes Are Sad," Dom Bede Griffiths on "The Incarnation and the East," and George P. Carlin with excerpts from the tragic letters of Japanese soldiers.

This is the sort of material that will appear in The Commonweal during 1954. Send for a trial subscription.

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